

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AEC-11 ACDA-19 IO-14 SCI-06 FEA-02 EUR-25

DRC-01 /169 W

----- 012953

R 231100Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1032

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COLOMBO 1407

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CE, IN

SUBJ: INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION

REF: COLOMBO 1392

1. DEPUTY MINISTER FOR DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS LAKSHMAN JAYAKODY RAISED SUBJECT OF INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION WITH AMBASSADOR MAY 21, ASKING USG'S REACTION. AMBASSADOR REPLIED ON BASIS GUIDANCE CONTAINED STATE 104770. JAYAKODY THEN ASKED WHETHER WE HAD ANY INFORMATION SOVIET UNION HAD ASSISTED GOI IN ACHIEVING ITS CAPABILITY TO EXPLODE NUCLEAR DEVICE. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT, AS FAR AS HE WAS AWARE, WE HAD NO INFORMATION INDICATING USSR COLLABORATION, ADDING THAT SOVIETS WERE ALSO OPPOSED TO NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION.

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2. ASKED ABOUT GSL'S REACTIONS, JAYAKODY

SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED QUESTION WITH PRIME MINISTER AND HAD SUGGESTED GSL HANDLE ISSUE IN MANNER SIMILAR TO GSL'S HANDLING OF US DECISION TO EXPAND DIEGO GARCIA. UNDER THIS PROCEDURE, MRS. BANDARANAIKE MIGHT WRITE LETTER TO INDIRA GANDHI INQUIRING INTO BACKGROUND OF DECISION ON NUCLEAR EXPLOSION AND GOI'S INTENTIONS. JAYAKODY WENT ON TO SAY THAT GSL WAS CONCERNED ABOUT IMPACT OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSION WITHIN SOUTH ASIAN REGION BUT HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO ISSUE PUBLIC STATEMENT. THERE WAS REASONABLE CONFIDENCE INDIA WOULD ACT RESPONSIBLY UNDER PRIME MINISTER GANDHI'S LEADERSHIP BUT THERE WAS NONETHELESS ANXIETY ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN SHOULD OTHER POLITICAL ELEMENTS, SUCH AS JAN SANGH, GAIN GREATER INFLUENCE OVER INDIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY.

3. COMMENT: IF GSL FOLLOWS SAME PROCEDURE USED IN HANDLING USG'S DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION, IT MIGHT DEFER MAKING ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT OR COMMENT UNTIL AFTER LETTER TO MRS. GANDHI HAS BEEN DELIVERED. TO DATE, GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TO EXPLOSION CONTINUES MUTED WHILE PRESS REACTION HAS BEEN LIMITED AND NOT OVERLY CRITICAL.
VAN HOLLEN

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Message Attributes

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